

MARRIAGE AND THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

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is not primarily conceived of as raising seed; his main duty is to care for her and to maintain intact the *mumywalu* scheme.

The economic aspect of marriage is more important than the sexual. The duty of a niece to marry at her cattle-linked aunt's is phrased as an economic obligation. A wife has power because she is the provider of food. There are many other sources of the influence of an old woman, both over her son and her son's wife, and they have economic implications. Nagambi, a man of thirty-five, scorned to bow to his wife's wishes except when she was possessed; yet the wishes of his mother dictated when he should go to town or return home, what land he should plough and when, what medicines or doctors he should get for his baby. The apparent helplessness of women when a stranger calls and asks for information or wishes to do business is not wholly assumed, for theoretically business and politics are the affairs of the men; but often enough it is convenient to defer to the men and to exercise a woman's influence behind the scenes. Thrift and industry are the virtues valued in a wife; it is the hard-working girl who is coveted as a bride. For that reason also, a faithful concubine (*mugaula*) has in practice a high status.

Madume's brother had both a wife and a *mugaula*, and when he died the *mugaula* took all his property for her son. Madume, who denied her right to do this, brought an action and the case eventually came to the capital. The court wholly ignored the issue as to whether a *mugaula* had legal rights. It contented itself with urging the *mugaula* to give Madume control of the assets which had accrued from the work of his brother's son, warning Madume not to press his case. 'Did not the *mugaula* cook and work long for your brother?' it asked. 'And was it not due to her thrift that there are goods? You are wrong to worry her.' Unions with concubines are often stable and economically satisfactory. Quarrels, even jealousies, between a man and his *mugaula* sometimes come before the courts, just as if they were disturbances within a family. Muhale complained, not that his son was living with a *mugaula*, but that the *mugaula*'s laziness had prevented him from giving a beer-drink for a whole year. When the jealousy of the *mugaula* threatened domestic trouble, the queen considered the matter important enough to send a messenger, who, with the district head, came to settle the dispute; the court dealt with the matter exactly as if the parties were married, urging mutual forbearance and co-operation. 'A man who illicitly lives upon a woman, eating from her porridge bowls (*madilo*), acquires no rights over her or her children, and is derisively called 'father-of the porridge bowls' (*ramadilo*).

Instead of attempting to deal with the conflicts and tangles in *mumywalu* and marriage, we shall refer to a few of their aspects merely. The conditioning of cross-cousins for their obligations as marital partners does not eliminate temperamental differences, and in modern conditions, which emphasize individual acquisitiveness as against reciprocity, the burden of obligations in the *mumywalu* ring becomes too heavy. A father, more intent upon the polygynous circle of huts than upon maintaining the chain of *mumywalu* exchanges, may use the cattle coming in from his daughter's marriage to acquire a wife for himself; and an almost

578 unmanageable complication arises, unless there is agreement between all the persons interested: the son to whom the cattle should have been allotted, the daughter from whose marriage they came, the house established by these cattle, and the father himself. Tensions arise in many other ways: neglect of one wife and favouritism of another in respect of economic services, interference with the independence of the houses, and so on. Unwillingness to co-operate in the home and in fulfilling the wider group obligations is a more potent cause of trouble than adultery; and witchcraft, except as a symptom of tensions otherwise created, takes a minor place; and neither adultery nor witchcraft as such can snap the *munywalo* bonds.

426 The character of these tensions may be briefly illustrated by the case
595 of Muvirwa and Mara. Faced with starvation, Mara obtained cattle
684 from Muvirwa (who was a friend, not a relative), promising, in accordance with the 'mud-stamper' institution, a daughter in exchange. In fact, this daughter, the little 'mud-stamper', as she is called, because she is too young to stamp mealies, was not yet in existence. That is not unusual in these transactions, which require that the 'mud-stamper' shall in due course be given gratuitously to the benefactor; and thereby the two lineages become cattle-linked, so that, for instance, Mara and his descendants would have to offer brides and receive cattle and Muvirwa and his descendants would offer cattle and receive brides. If Mara had no brides to offer, Muvirwa would still have to give cattle; otherwise the link might be broken. The 'mud-stamper', after reaching years of discretion, may dislike the benefactor, who is usually already old and decrepit, and that may lead to conflicts. In this instance, when Mara's daughter entered her *khoba* initiation, Muvirwa, as is customary, paid the *levala* goat, for a bridegroom for whom a bride is 'born' must, so to speak, nurse her and 'grow' her. Not long afterwards the 'mud-stamper' died. Mara offered another daughter and, as the girl had died before actual marriage, no further *munywalo* was required from Muvirwa. But the substitute, having grown up, married and then deserted Muvirwa, who was already very old; she ran away to a lover, Mara himself conniving at the desertion. Mara returned some cattle to Muvirwa, thereby severing the relationship, and promised the balance when the lover had paid *munywalo*.

684 Years passed and nothing happened. Muvirwa eventually brought an action, which Magaebia, Mara's wife, contested. She said that on the death of the 'mud-stamper' she had offered to return the cattle, but this was refused, that the substitute was forced to marry Muvirwa against her will, and that the religious ceremony was omitted. Muvirwa replied that he had already received seventeen of the twenty-four cattle (the number to which the original eight had increased), that it was thus not he who had broken the relationship, and that the religious ceremony, which for various reasons could not be held in Mara's village, had taken place at the village of Magaebia's brother. The court could not but side with Mara, but it tried hard to reduce his claim, for twenty-four cattle, it said, were an enormous number. Then recriminations broke out between Mara and his wife, which revealed a many-sided conflict in the

643 After the fire rite there follows the rite of opening the door, which will
 578 determine the identity of the heir. No one knows for certain who will
 succeed. Some nobles, availing themselves of the interregnum, mobilize
 their supporters, and all come fully armed, for there is sure to be some
 display of hostility. Even in 1896, at the accession of Mujaji III, a son
 of a wife of Mujaji II and great councillor marched upon the capital
 supported by the Mahasha, but there was no strife, as Mujaji III's
 [342] followers were prepared. The rival claimants, in the presence of the
 assembled people, go one by one to the hut in which the queen died and
 which (like one of the queen's huts even to-day) has two doors. They
 approach the door one by one, address the spirit of the deceased, saying
 who they are, and lightly touch the door. It is arranged that the most
 ambitious claimants go first, and those who are indifferent as regards
 their prospects last, the true heir to whom the door will open taking his
 place between them.

The spirit of the deceased, by opening the door, chooses the successor.
 The new queen, taking the axe, spear, and shield of her royal predecessors,
 escapes by the other door. She may have to flee, if the party of a rival is
 too strong, but in time she will be formally presented by a great coun-
 cillor to the people. There is doubt as to the fate of the person who held
 the door from within: some say he must die, others that he is given a wife
 and sent out of the country. There is much uncertainty and secrecy
 about what happened in 1896; it is even doubted whether the door was
 opened. The reason lay in the fear of European intervention, for just
 previously the Boer General had been deceived and the lowveld tribes
 conquered, as described in Chapter I. Cowed by disaster, the Lovedu
 wisely decided to emphasize, not their own ritual, but the formal con-
 firmation of the accession by the European.

643 The opening of the door, as known among neighbouring tribes, serves
 578 chiefly to resolve conflicts between rivals to the throne. It sometimes
 173 co-exists with institutional predetermination of the heir—for instance,
 where he must be the chief son of a wife married with special ceremonies
 and with cattle contributed by the whole tribe, the issue of a house in
 which the tribesmen all have a stake. In such circumstances conflicts
 arise, and European authority throws its weight on the side of 'con-
 stitutional arrangements' rather than 'coincidence'. In some tribes the
 opening of the door serves to strengthen the claim of the institutional heir;
 that is the case where there is no great massing of institutions behind the
 chief heir and conflicts are liable to break out if there are several claimants
 of standing. Among the Lovedu, succession was quite uncertain, the
 personal choice of the chief, not primogeniture, being stressed. The great
 son seldom succeeded, it is said, because the second child was favoured;
 and that is one explanation of the origin of the Mamaila, Sekhōpo, and
 Rakhwadu tribes, for the great son was driven out of the country. In
 traditional history the 'Filler of the Rivers', who was chief son and seized
 the throne, had to make way for the 'Drainer of the Rivers', who proved
 to be the choice of his father and to whom the rain secrets had been
 imparted. Khashani, the great son, was expelled by Mugodo, his younger
 brother (we do not know whether he was the second son), of whom it is

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939) 1943

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said that his father treated him as an outcast in order to deceive the people. Khashani was, however, given ritual precedence and in this as well as in the fact that it was the line of Malegugu, great son of Mugodo, which provided the 'husbands' of the last two queens, we may see perhaps an attempt to compensate the great son and retain his allegiance. The pattern of antagonism to the true heir continued to be followed by the queens. Mugodo was outcast from the capital, Mujaji I was born in despised Lekhwareni, and Mujaji II and III were expelled from the country.

The choice of the heir among the kings is represented as exercised by them personally; he who must raise the heir to the queens is chosen by an inner, secret 'council' of relatives. We cannot describe its membership by saying that one is a sister, the other a brother, and so on; each is related to the chief in a dozen ways and their pre-eminence in the royal 'councils' derives from complicated inter-relationships, prestige, sagacity, and loyalty as well as institutionalized arrangements.

The accession of queens has raised new problems of succession. The heir apparent is theoretically prohibited from having children before she ascends, and, when she ascends, her powers of bearing children may be exhausted. This is a simple statement of a much more complicated situation, but suffice it to add that, ideally, should the queen or, if she is barren, her wife who is chosen to bear the heir, have male issue, the child has either to be killed or to be excluded by a mechanism with strong social or ritual sanctions—namely, the opening of the door. Mujaji I's son was killed, so it is said; but the uterine brother of Mujaji III was allowed to live and become a great councillor. Another problem is the exclusion from power of the 'husband' of the queen. Queens may not marry, but the physiological father of their children may be a councillor, as he was in the reign of Mujaji III, and it is essential that he should be a close relative. To support such arrangements in a patrilineal society is one of the functions of the 'opening of the door'. It also confirms choices made by the inner 'council', visibly and publicly demonstrates the will of the ancestors, enforces loyalty to all relatives of the royal house any one of whom may become chief, and unmistakably points out to whose hands the rain secrets have been entrusted.

The quarrels and conflicts leading to the flight of the heir are much stressed in tradition; they are nothing if not realistic, and one is often in doubt whether they are genuine or merely staged conflicts. Leakhali and her brother, together with Leakhali's daughter, Mujaji III, were genuinely expelled. Leakhali had her own village and her own wives and was proud and independent; she and her brother objected to the influence of a doctor who had come to cure Mujaji II of her barrenness, but stayed to be her lover. After a public insult to this doctor in the presence of the queen at a beer-party at Leakhali's village, the queen sent her wife the calabash and firebrand. Leakhali and her brother fled, and in exile Mujaji III was taught by her mother's brother, thus fulfilling, it is said, the law that the heir must be taught by her maternal uncle. The situation appears to be re-enacted to-day, with this difference, that it is the queen's own daughter who, after her lover's quarrel with a great councillor, fled

643 to join him in exile. The conflict was so serious that the tribe seethed
 578 with disaffection, though the queen seemed to be torn between love for
 687 her daughter and disapproval of the whole episode. The present conflict
 644 is in many respects typical. There is, as there used to be in the past,
 strife between the old councillors, who lose their power when the old
 queen dies, and the new councillors, who side with the new queen. The
 latter gradually supplant the former, but regard with fear the day when
 the friends of the heir in turn will oust them. This struggle is very real,
 and seems to reflect a more fundamental conflict; for the exalted purpose
 of the royal institutions exacts an unnatural sacrifice by the queen in
 order to make way for the heir she naturally loves.

643 The whole royal complex is perfectly logical once it is granted that there
 644 must be queens, that succession is uncertain, and that ritual suicide is
 the guarantee of the chief's divinity. In a society in which the 'sister'
 (*khadi*) is priestess, her great religious role, still seen to-day among
 neighbouring tribes where chiefs are males, falls to the queen among the
 Lovedu. The ideal, imperfectly actualized since queens replaced kings,
 still persists that the *khadi* of the chief should have power and be given a
 large district to rule. In theory the brother of the chief is the great
 councillor, general, and judge. But in practice the complications set up
 by having queens throws these arrangements out of gear. True to pattern,
 the greatest district head is to-day a woman, who is a 'sister' to the queen
 and, though a 'sister' threefold (through mother, legal father, and paternal
 uncle), she is not the uterine or ritual 'sister'. At present the relatives
 through the queen's mother, not through Mujaji II her legal father, are
 important councillors, but it is not unlikely that in the next reign the
 great councillors will be the present heir's relatives through her legal
 father, the queen, who is also her physiological mother.

642 Owing to the inapplicability of the term 'council' to Lovedu arrange-
 643 ments, we need say only a few words on this subject. There is no need
 644 of a visible organization to support Lovedu court life, which is ceremoni-
 ous, but not politically oriented. Power and authority derive from the
 queen's divine appointment, her exclusive secret of rain-making, and her
 strategic position in the social web. She is neither a military nor a
 political leader; she does not even have a priesthood organization to assist
 her in her function as high-priest. There are confidential advisers, but
 they neither constitute the more or less definite secret council (*sephiri*)
 of some neighbouring tribes nor necessarily function as political coun-
 cillors; on the contrary the former, having assisted in the accession of the
 queen; are in institutional conflict with the latter, who later gain political
 control. The councillors represent the assertion of power by the rising
 generation of men in the sphere of law and politics as against women and
 the older generation in ritual, religion, and the social system. They are
 part mainly of the court (*khosi*) and the tribal gathering (*khosiyo*), two
 indeterminate bodies.

644 Confidential advisers are mainly important district heads; councillors
 643 are always residents in the capital. Both are relatives, but, in the case of
 634 the confidants, not necessarily close relatives of the queen. In the inner
 royal circle; the closest kin are necessarily those reckoned through the

If favoured by one of the great councillors, they could be given their own hut (and in the old days a dowry into the bargain) and be allowed to cohabit there with the councillor. This gains for them an honourable place in the capital, where they exercise great influence in the private councils of the queen, intercede for others with the queen and are her companions. *Vafanoni* of high rank may, as mistresses of their own villages, aspire to the great circle of huts drawn by the establishments of their wives, and they may even attain the pinnacle of prestige where, as happens when the queen is barren, they are chosen to bear the heir to the throne. The lesser *vafanoni*, who have remained chaste, may be released from their vows and allowed 'to go about in the bush', and eventually they may be handed out to nobles or district heads.

It is, however, contrary to the ideals expressed for a virgin *mutanoni* to be given away, though the ideal recedes before other considerations, such as the poverty of a noble or sympathy in a loss he has sustained. Only some of the *vafanoni* who have illicit children continue to remain at the capital—for instance, there is an old woman who has a married son about forty years old. She had her lapse when she went on a visit to her home, but no one knows who her lover was. The son still lives with his mother at the capital; as a son of the queen, he is not without influence, but his influence is resented. He and his mother are regarded as witches, and he has many enemies and for long periods has to escape to town to allow threatening storms to blow over. Councillors can hardly afford to allow wives of the queen who have sons to remain permanently: the honour is too great and the opportunities of exploiting their position too numerous. The institutional arrangement of sending *vafanoni* with children away to be married to others avoids this danger. The children may, if they are proud, call themselves *Mujaji* and they are described as 'the heads of *Muhale*', but legally they are no longer children of the queen and they lose their opportunities for intriguing.

Through her wives, the queen becomes 'son-in-law' to all her district heads, and by allocating these wives to other district heads and to noble-men she becomes parent-in-law to them. The system thus uses the mechanism of the social system to forge a great network of chains radiating from the queen like a web to all strategic points in the society. The link with the queen theoretically never breaks, as a wife handed out must, when she has a daughter, send her in turn to be married by the queen. An important wife, even after allocation, may still enter the queen's hut. The queen remains interested in the welfare of her erstwhile wives and takes them back if the husband ill-treats them or their children. A new link, that of marriage, is created between the people of the wife allocated and of the husband to whom she is given. A man pays no *munywalo* for such a wife, yet the link is a true *munywalo* link; for, if the wife deserts, the husband may, though he has given nothing, demand back *munywalo* from her people (that which the queen gave them). He may complain to the queen, who can, if she wishes, urge his case, but she usually says, 'I can freely give. I cannot return by force.'

How district heads become linked with the queen and with one another may be shown by an illustration which we have greatly simplified for

illustrated in a proverb the sense of which is that you may be the unsus-⁷⁵⁴pecting victim of the witchcraft of your closest friend, or, more literally, Belegwane, the enemy, does not care; [so intimate with him are you that] you eat with him. [yet] he is the foe that eats you (*Belegwane mulala a lili vone; u la nayo, gi mulala was hu la wone*). And people chased away as witches from one area or tribe never have any difficulty in being accepted into another.

Considerations such as the return of cattle are often strong enough to deter a man from chasing away a wife who has bewitched some one in the village (he would never chase away a wife merely for bewitching outsiders). When once we asked a man why he kept a wife who had been found guilty of bewitching her fellow wife, he replied, 'She is my witch' (*gi mulali wa ga*). Being fond of her, he merely built her a separate village. Some people who have never been publicly accused of witchcraft are nevertheless known to be bad witches. In such cases, people may fear them and try to keep on good terms with them in order to avoid evil consequences.

One of the most fruitful studies in regard to witchcraft is the investigation of the relationship of the people who bewitch one another. Two⁷⁵⁴ main categories must be distinguished, viz. cases in which relatives bewitch one another and cases in which the evil is sent by non-relatives. The Lovedu maintain, and the opinion is borne out both by one's general impressions and by the facts, that witches injure mainly those with whom they are in close contact—that is, relatives and neighbours—and that it is difficult to bewitch a stranger. And it is remarkable that of fifty cases of witchcraft observed by us as they came before the *khoro* and given in the table below, 70 per cent. involve close relatives. Not all relatives are apt to bewitch one, but both men and women are equally liable to harm either men or women. A mother never, it is believed, bewitches her own children, and there is even a saying to the effect that a *mugome* who points out one's mother is not able to divine (*mugome u a tia vumamahu a u khoni hu laula*); and, although brother and cattle-linked sister sometimes hate one another, openly as well as secretly, they cannot harm one another, it is said, because they would use 'the medicine bag of the [same] mother'. Similarly neither a son nor a daughter can bewitch the mother.

The most prolific single source of witchcraft is the conflict of co-wives^[595] (24 per cent. of all cases). Their relationship in the polygynous family is a difficult one; the houses are independent, not subservient to one another, yet they are in close contact, and the insistence upon compromises occasions many mental conflicts. Spouses also bewitch one another, but wives kill or injure their husbands more frequently than husbands kill their wives; it is said that a husband who has only one wife will never bewitch her, except perhaps among Christians, who can have only one wife. The conflict of spouses is an aspect of a wider institutional conflict, that between relatives-in-law. If they have irksome obligations towards one another, the society insists that their relationship shall be characterized by mutual respect and helpfulness and that their difficulties, especially *marrymale* difficulties, are to be resolved as far as possible by the methods and procedure of the *khoro*. These factors explain why,

754 despite the many sources of tension between them, the cases are not, as
578 one might expect, overwhelmingly predominant: only 20 per cent. of
the total given in our table are cases of wives or their relatives bewitching
husbands or their relatives, and only 16 per cent. husbands or their
relatives bewitching wives or their relatives.

What is even more arresting is the fact that easily aggrieved relatives who, as it is phrased, are 'very sensitive' and readily nurse grievances, never or rarely bewitch: such are cattle-linked brothers or sisters, father's sisters, fathers, father's brothers and grandparents. It is even clear from what we have already said that they are believed to have repressed complaints, but they cannot project as witchcraft the displeasures or misfortunes or failures upon those who must, but do not, respect and humour them. They can and do cause illness, but it is not by way of witchcraft, and the resolution of the conflict is by pardon and *hu phasa*, through the gods, not through *ovulvi*. In other words, witchcraft is a reflection, not of tensions as such, whether open or repressed, but of tensions within the framework of cultural mechanisms for avoiding their being projected as witchcraft. They must be studied in the whole configuration of institutions and social values: the permissible or approved remedies, the interposition of the hierarchy of age and rank between competing individuals, the compromises and reconciliations that are insisted upon, and the extent to which mental drives are conditioned to the cultural pattern or allowed outlets or are blocked by culturally stressed values.

The incidence of witchcraft between strangers is much more intelligible to us, because it arises in situations of conflict that are not very different from our own. But the percentage of these cases (30 per cent.), even when we include the 10 per cent. of cases between distant kin who are neighbours rather than relatives, shows how largely the social structure is built upon the kin.

754 The following table represents a very broad analysis of fifty cases of
578 witchcraft that we observed as they came before the *khwa* and that may
595 be simplified for statistical presentation:

Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
I. <i>Relatives</i> (a) House or co-wife against house or co-wife	Co-wife	Co-wife	1	Jealousy about lovers; neglect by husband	
	Co-wife	Co-wife and child of co-wife	2	Jealousy about children and husband's attention	
	Co-wife	Child of co-wife	2	Disagreements about <i>munywalo</i>	

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
I. Relatives (a) House or co-wife against house or co-wife—cont.	Co-wife and her mother	Co-wife's child	2	Favouritism of husband and other mixed motives	24
	Inherited wife	Co-wife and her children	2	Use of cattle of one house by another and questions of prestige	
	Widow	Fellow widow's child	1	Property arrangements	
	Wife of brother	Wife of another brother	1	Complex jealousies	
	Son of co-wife	Chief son and his wife	1	Status and position	
(b) Wife against husband	Wife	Husband	2	Friction, favouritism of other wives, position	30
	Wife and/or wife's mother	Husband's adulterine child or lover	4	Sexual jealousy and neglect of wife	
	Wife	Husband's sister's child	1	Disagreement about marriage of children and <i>munywalo</i>	
	Wife	Husband's brother, his wife, or his child	2	Position, jealousy	
	Wife's mother	Husband's child	1	Disagreements	

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
(c) Husband against wife	Husband	Wife	1	Pre-marital seduction and <i>munywalo</i> trouble	
	Husband	Wife's adulterine child	2	Husband impotent; sexual jealousy	
	Husband	Wife's sister	1	Husband jilted	
	Husband	Brother's son's wife and her mother	1	Revenge for misfortune (illness)	
	Husband	Wife's brother's daughter's husband	1	Wife's brother refused his daughter as wife to witch's son	
	Husband's mother	Wife		Unfaithfulness of wife	16
	Husband's mother	Wife's sister	1	Wife's sister jilted witch	
(d) Parent and own child	Son	Father	1	Son wished to oust father from position as district head	6
	Father	Son	1	Son cohabited with young wife of father	
	Father	Son's wife	1	Son cohabited with inherited wife of father	
(e) Uterine brothers and sisters	Elder sister	Younger sister	1	Younger sister jilted elder sister's husband	4
	Sister (and mother)	Brother's child	1	Brother resents power of sister, and <i>munywalo</i> trouble	
Total relatives					70

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
II. Strangers (a) Sexual conflicts	Girl	Lover	1	Lover jilted girl	10
	Boy	Lover	1	Lover engaged to her cross-cousin	
	Adulterer	Married woman's child	2	Loss of fine and right to woman or child	
	Commoner (orphan)	Girl of noble birth	1	Refusal of marriage by parents who had adopted orphan	
(b) Various conflicts	Man and his mother	Whole village	1	Status, loss of prestige and amenities	20
	Woman	Distant male relative	1	Refusal to implement economic arrangement <i>re</i> partner-ploughing	
	Widow	Distant male relative	1	Indirect economic rivalries	
	Man	Male neighbour	1	Stranger held cattle that came from witch as <i>munyalo</i>	
	Man	Male neighbour	1	Envy of sewing machine acquired in town by neighbour	
	Man	Driver of car	1	Jealousy <i>re</i> privileges secured because he could drive car	
	Male friends	Man	1	Man's popularity with girls, owing to dancing ability, resented	
	Woman	Rival	1	Rivals for councillor's attention, sexual and otherwise	
	'Mother' of <i>khoba</i>	<i>Khoba</i> initiate	1	Initiate who is to marry cross-cousin wanted by witch as daughter-in-law	
	Shangana-Tonga	Lovedu man	1	Competition for job in town	
	Total strangers				30

It will take us too far afield to discuss the nature of the conflicts in detail in the various cases. But a few observations are perhaps necessary.

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578 Firstly, the cause of the conflict is not necessarily the one assigned by the parties, though the objective situation is often seen by others. Sometimes very trivial causes are given, but they have to be interpreted in their total setting. Secondly, as regards non-relatives, it is said that nobles are sometimes 'seen in the dice', but they are never publicly accused by mere commoners; it will be noticed that, on the other hand, there is one case of a noble accusing a commoner. Rich people who are not nobles enjoy no special immunity; unpleasant people, especially those who are quarrelsome, ambitious, or competitive, are often accused. Conflicts arise owing to close contacts, but may continue after the parties are separated, and witchcraft may be sent any distance, even as far as Johannesburg. Thirdly, the table does not give a number of types of cases; they are merely the cases that came before the court, many of them being dismissed as nonsense. Finally, although the motives are complicated in most of the cases, it is possible to say that jilted love or refusal of sexual advances is an important factor in about 32 per cent. of the cases recorded.

But we must not think of Freudian repressions, for sexual affairs are given recognition in the institution of *vuḍabu*. We must consider lovers' conflicts in the cultural setting. The sexual urge is not repressed, but the lover whose advances are rejected, though he has opportunities elsewhere, feels aggrieved. The girl, whose choice of a marital partner is limited, seeks extra-marital adventure, but it must be clandestine and occasions difficulties, and the situation between lover, husband, and wife is an uneasy one in which ill-feeling readily arises. The man who has a child by a lover has no institutional claim on that child, and he may be given away by the woman and have to pay a heavy fine, with the result that he is angered. There are also dangers in sexual intercourse and, if a man or woman suffers as a result, he may take revenge. In other words, the conflict situation must be ascribed, not to repressions, but to the incidents of the whole cultural system. Similar considerations apply whenever we analyse any of the other situations of conflict. It is far beyond the purpose of this book to undertake an analysis of the psychological aspects of these conflicts, but we would say that witchcraft is to be explained mainly, not by psycho-pathology, but by a relativistic psychology, arising out of the values and institutional configuration of the culture.

When a man is ill he will immediately, if he has an enemy or has had a quarrel, think of the possibility of witchcraft. This impulse is encouraged by the technique of the dice, which, while indicating the totem or sex of the witch, leaves the client to decide to whom among his friends, enemies, or relatives these must apply. A person with a grievance or an unpopular person is more likely than others to be thought responsible for harm. When some cattle of the queen, usually used by Mudumi for ploughing, were traded to a European, he complained most bitterly. A week later when lightning struck a storage enclosure in the royal village Mudumi was immediately suspect. Some of the cattle belonging to Setemane's inherited wife had been taken by the police, together with those of her husband, in settlement of a debt. She grumbled continuously about her loss. A year and a half later, on the death of a child of her fellow wife, she was suspected at once and, after consultation of the

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bones, her husband chased her away. A person with an unpleasant face⁷⁵⁴ very often earns the reputation of being a witch, even though nothing has⁵⁷⁸ been definitely attributed to him. A very old person, too, is apt to be thought a witch; his long life is attributed to his bartering the lives of younger relatives for his own. Just as people with grievances are suspected of witchcraft, so successful ones are thought to be specially liable to being bewitched—those who reap better crops than others, successful hunters, those favoured by their European masters. On the other hand, their success is also liable to be attributed to witchcraft on their part.

It has been said that witchcraft is a reflection of the intense hatreds of which the Bantu mind is capable. True, the European is appalled at the seriousness of the crimes attributed to witches for the most trivial reasons. The mother's brother's wife kills the child of her husband's sister who is living with them because he eats too much: 'he finishes our corn'; because a woman no longer loves him, a man not only causes intense suffering to her during a prolonged birth, but also kills the child; jealous of the large crop reaped by his neighbour, a man sends lightning to destroy his whole harvest. These things do not, however, present themselves in this way to the mind of the Lovedu. A Lovedu argues, not from real cause to effect in such matters, but from effect to cause, which makes it all appear in a somewhat different light. A child dies and he looks around him for a possible cause. He thinks of possible motives and enemies, but can find none. He consults the dice, which point to a woman of such-and-such a totem. The only one to answer this description is the mother's brother's wife. She happens to be known as ungenerous, perhaps she was one day heard to comment on having an extra mouth to feed. The misfortune is thus projected upon her: but it is not a psychopathic, it is an approved cultural escape technique or compensation. In cases of illness or death, people tend to seek the cause in the direction of traditional jealousies. A wife of the queen dies in childbirth. The cause cannot be a jilted lover, because she and the father of the child were on the best of terms. But he is a married man, and women are known through jealousy to cause difficult childbirth to the lovers of husbands. The death must have been caused by his wife (even though she lives miles away). Nothing is done in the matter; moreover, there is no general agreement in the verdicts of different doctors. Six months later a young girl in the village dies suddenly of blood poisoning; her mother is known to have had quarrels with the deceased wife of the queen. It is therefore generally rumoured that the grave must have been treated to 'send back' death and the death of the child indicates that her mother was the witch responsible. Nothing more is said of the lover's wife.

Witchcraft provides an explanation of the worst evils, such as sickness⁷⁵⁴ and death, that befall man; it is the principle of evil, the Bantu Satan.⁷⁶¹ Illness caused naturally or by ancestors is generally curable; it is only⁷⁷⁷ witchcraft that really kills. It was at first a source of great amazement to us that a man could find it possible to live on socially good terms with some one who had killed his father, attending the same beer-parties and able to converse in friendly fashion. But unless the case has been publicly dealt with and the witch smelt out, the evidence is considered incomplete,

177 (workers), but 'Fools, why labour when others rest'; the Christian
 795 reply is, 'We are orphans and must work to satisfy our needs.' Christians
 184 are for ever planning new schemes and trying new methods; even their
 women-folk take in washing and, despite the church's discouragement,
 occasionally seek work in the towns. Christian men eagerly take to
 making irrigated gardens, and some become transport riders or itinerant
 hawkers; while it is Christian women who hire out their services to
 neighbours and make a business of pottery. It is chiefly among Christians
 that salt, meat, and cash take the place of beer in the work party. The
 total result is not merely a better economic sense, but also a growth of the
 spirit of competition and calculation; not merely greater industry and
 less improvidence, but also exploitation of their fellow tribesmen and
 self-seeking; and, instead of relying upon the roundabout reciprocities,
 Christians demand more immediate satisfactions and more precise and
 personal rewards. Aggressiveness and display, rivalries and suspicion,
 develop side by side with ideas of progress and a desire for advancement.

177 There are often fierce jealousies in the Christian settlements, and the
 795 tensions occasionally set into motion waves of accusations of witchcraft
 184 which break up the settlements. The classical example quoted as evidence
 of the great incidence of witchcraft among Christians is the disruption of
 the station at Moila. No one could be trusted, and witches were said to
 administer medicines to children, taking them out at night to crack their
 skulls upon the rocks. Christian boys are said to gossip more about
 578 witches than do their pagan brothers, and nowhere except in Christian
 754 settlements were we warned against accepting food from strangers.
 Witchcraft among Christians is difficult to observe, as it is driven under-
 ground; Christians do not publicly appeal to the smeller-out or seek the
 diviner to discover the cause of death, but they secretly consult the bones
 and slander the enemies that are thought to have sent the death. They
 tend to combat witchcraft, not by open accusation, but by privately
 'sending back' the evil; and they firmly believe that the queen makes rain,
 albeit through the grace of the Christian God. The pollution that
 prevents rain is ascribed to sin—especially incest, rape, adultery, sexual
 offences, murder, and witchcraft—rather than to wrong burials. Tensions
 in the Christian settlements and the suspicion of espionage increase
 secretiveness about personal business, fields, and crops; but Christians
 are far more communicative than pagans about tribal matters and
 custom.

Amid conflicting tendencies, we find it difficult to say whether witch-
 craft is more prevalent among Christians than among pagans. The new
 outlook upon the nature of man and of his purposes increases tensions and
 rivalries, but also calls into question the assumptions of magic and witch-
 craft; and proscription leads to more underground activity and the
 development of new techniques, but also drives out of the field the visible
 reminders of the world of supernatural forces. In our opinion, the total
 situation may be summed up in the words of a Christian informant who
 has maintained intact his tribal background: 'Education gives men the
 power of witchcraft, and when we all are educated we shall all be witches,
 but, like Europeans, quite harmless to one another.'

to kill us by poisoning and starving us, because they dislike hearing the groaning of a sick man. They will not allow us to go into the sun when we are getting well. The nurses ill-treat us if we do what we think is right. We get no filling food and our only enjoyment, conversation with one another, is repressed by the command to "shut up". So profound is the suspicion, that one of our good friends died rather than go to hospital, while another, who had sustained a compound fracture, was persuaded to accept our advice to be taken to a European doctor only at the very last moment.

Yet let us not forget that in 1939 a tribal 'Cabinet' was set up and one of its 'ministers' was the guardian of health. His last message to us was that, in accordance with a decision of the 'Cabinet', he 'was watching the diet of the capital and had decided upon strictly prohibiting the running about of fowls'. By old and still persisting custom, it should be mentioned, fowls are not allowed in the capital, because, it is said, they are dirty animals.

Western culture hardly undermines magic and witchcraft: police boys use magic to ward off 'the spears of their enemies', guns are 'doctored' to make them shoot straight and even the inadequacies of European justice are compensated by magic (*hu niclela*). In this respect the culture has met the challenge, however inappropriately from our point of view. But it has failed to handle successfully the spirit of modern inquiry found among those who have been to school or have been stimulated by their experiences in the towns. Young men do not understand the long process of growing into a culture and ask questions which the old men cannot or will not answer. These young men, who judge by the standards of the little learning which is a dangerous thing, tend to despise what is not made intelligible to them. In their eyes, for instance, the mysteries of the *digzma* and the *zwidajani* are shams, and the fact that no knowledge is imparted in the circumcision 'schools' condemns them as nonsense. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect both for traditional values and old people. But the total effect is minimized by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older and begin to become part of and have a stake in the culture. Moreover, inquisitiveness is stamped as the immaturity, almost imbecility, of youth, and the insinuation that the doubts are due to the white man's insidious influence goes far to repress them as unworthy and disloyal.

In this book we have described Lovedu culture as it is to-day, touching but cursorily in the present chapter upon the changes that have occurred or the trends that are apparent in some groups of people. We have seen that the interpenetration in the pre-European period has effected far greater institutional changes than in the European period. Even the incorporation of the cult of spirit possession, which came twenty years after the European, represents a far greater direct evolution than the changes in forms brought about by the Christian religion. The feature of pre-European merging has been incorporation, with modifications, of culture elements and the reciprocal effect upon existing institutions and culture elements. The feature of European penetration, except in material

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was not announced for a year, while, as the body decomposed, such vital ingredients of the rain-medicine as the skin and body-dirt were carefully collected; after the announcement a period of anarchy often supervened as rival claimants marshalled their armed forces for the struggle for the throne. At the end of this year of mourning all the fires of the country were put out with purificatory rain-medicine (*mufug*) from the official keeper at the capital.

This fire rite symbolizes purification of the country as well as a transition from one order to another. At any time when the country is not right (*naha a e loge*), as when there is severe drought, the fires are put out 'to usher in a new year' (i.e. a new order or period of operative forces). But the fire rite also symbolizes the means through which the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen are asserted. Finally, the beating out of the fires with cooling medicine is part of a complex of practices connected with heat and cold, symbolizing respectively dysphoria and euphoria. The 'earth is hot' (*mavu a fesa*) on the death of the queen and a new cosmic order has to be inaugurated by cooling it in preparation for the new rain-maker.

After the fire rite there follows the divine identification of the successor by the rite of opening the door. The rival claimants, one of whom, chosen by the inner royal council and the deceased queen, has been secretly prepared for his office, pass the hut in which the queen has died. They announce their identity to the spirit of the deceased, lightly touching the door of the hut, which yields to the chosen successor.

In and around the inner secret council where the choice is actually made centre serious tensions, not only between the present ruler and the heir-elect for whose sake and succession she must poison herself, apparently not always willingly, but also between those who depend for their position and prestige upon the patronage of one or the other. The 'chosen' heir always goes to live far away, ostensibly to conceal his or her identity but in reality also owing to a serious conflict with the reigning sovereign.¹

For the regulation of cosmic forces the queen relies not only on her divinity but also upon the royal rain-medicines and, in the last resort, on the agreement of the royal ancestor spirits. To prevent the weakening of the rain-medicine it must be revitalized by being given the first termites and first-fruits each year, and occasionally parts of a black sheep or, in the old days, a human being.

Rain-charms are liable to weaken (*fighela*) or become defiled (*khuma*) by certain deviations from the normal course of nature unless special precautions are taken. Twins, babies cutting their upper teeth before their lower, women dying in pregnancy, abortions and miscarriages, men dying from *dere*, a deadly coughing disease believed to be contracted by having sex intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose child has died before weaning—all these are deviations which contaminate the earth, causing it to be 'hot', and therefore have to be buried in wet soil or

¹ Males are not debarred from succession; indeed the early rulers were all men. But a definite preference for women rulers seems now to be firmly established.

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the court cases. Later, when the heir came of age, a new home-⁶³⁴stead was built. When Mabulana died in the 1940's his daughter,⁵⁶² a married woman who does not live in the area was made⁸²⁹ official district head. Her mother's brother came specially from⁸⁰⁴ the Capital to live in the area and help her by conducting⁸⁹² cases.

The mother's brother is considered to be eminently suitable⁶⁰⁴ as adviser to a ruler. The queen, too, traditionally has a mother's⁶³⁴ brother as chief councillor. A mother's brother has no claim to⁶⁴³ succession yet is deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's child. He will see to it that the sister's child gets his rights. The position of the son of the *khadi* who is acting as regent is somewhat different. There is a Lovedu proverb saying '*Bya thoga¹³⁴ monye bo dula muduhulu⁶⁰²*—where a master is lacking there sits the nephew'. And it is true that the son of a woman regent is often ruler in all but name. In the 1930's there were two blatant cases in which the rightful heirs of district heads who had long reached man's estate seemed in danger of permanently being ousted. In both cases in the long run when the *khadi* died the rightful heir was installed, in one of the cases on the expressed dying wish of the *khadi*. Right seems to prevail in the long run.

The Homestead Through Time

Basically a homestead consists of a group of 'houses' belonging⁵⁹² to the wives of the head or of the head and his half-brothers. Other relatives may attach themselves to it but the core remains the group of agnates.

Many of the smaller homesteads that have all the appearance⁵⁹² of being independent are found upon investigation to be portion⁵⁷¹ (a 'house') of a neighbouring homestead, which has become⁵⁷¹ separated in space but still considers itself part and acknowledges the authority and control of the senior homestead near by. The most obvious case of this arises where, owing to quarrels⁵⁷⁷ between co-wives, a husband has placed one of the wives in a homestead of her own and visits her there. If a wife has a married son then in the event of serious quarrels there is more likely to be a hiving off, the son moving to a different area with his mother and siblings.

In Figure 5 a very small homestead is shown. Here the

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absence of their menfolk at labour centres, reported every-⁵⁹²
 thing that took place to B. Later C moved away from his⁵⁹¹
 uterine brother B and in 1961 there were three separate home-⁵⁷¹
 steads.

The cleavage in a homestead then is on 'house' lines, though
 uterine brothers living together after the death of their father
 also eventually separate. The break may be the result of an⁵⁷¹ ●
 accusation of witchcraft or there may be an amicable separation
 as in the case described above. Reasons for separating vary:
 Batamedi moved away from his uterine brother, a district head-
 man, to satisfy political ambitions—he hoped to be made
 headman of an area to which his family had an ancient claim;
 Poke, a married man, left the homestead of his brother with⁵⁶⁹
 his mother and siblings for health reasons, suspecting that
 someone in the homestead might be bewitching him and hoping
 that a change would improve his condition. After many years
 in a different district, he returned to live in the original home-
 stead. Sons do not move away before the death of their father⁵⁷²
 unless there has been a quarrel in which their mothers are⁵⁷¹
 involved, or unless they become Christians and marry Christian
 girls. Even the death of the father does not necessarily bring
 about the separation of his sons; brothers and half-brothers may
 live together for years. As they marry more wives the size of
 the families increases, the homestead becomes more congested,
 the likelihood of quarrels greater and gradually the 'houses'
 move asunder. If half-brothers and brothers have not separated
 before, then the final break-up of the old homestead will come
 with the death of the eldest brother. For it is rare for a man to
 live under a young heir of the generation below him. Close
 religious and social ties, however, persist long after separation.
 Half-brothers continue to 'inherit' each other's wives and there
 may be a good deal of co-operation in work-parties and much
 consultation in family affairs. Lovedu homesteads are stable
 over long periods and there is a great value attached to remain-
 ing together.

Preferential Marriage down the Generations

The development of the 'houses' in a homestead, leading to the⁵⁹²
 gradual segmentation of the domestic group and separation of⁵⁹³
⁶⁰²